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ABSTRACT

The breakdown in parent/adolescent relationships, along with the increase in disruptive behaviors by adolescents, has become a major concern of parents and practitioners. The goal of this practicum is to review the literature on parent/adolescent conflicts and offer a conflict resolution program intended to enhance the coping skills of parents. The skills were taught through a training workshop and a home support/guidance segment which was used to monitor and assist parents as they practiced the new skills. These were then followed up with evaluation sessions. Results indicate that the 25 parents involved in the study experienced enhanced parent/adolescent relationships. Parental and professional responses to the program were very positive. Results from verbal reports and other measures showed an increase in parents' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors at the end of the program. All of the parents who attended the workshop expressed an increase in self awareness and respect for their adolescents. Overall, results showed an increased use of problem solving techniques by parents and a decrease in adolescent rebellion within the home. There was a noticeable decrease in parents' controlling and aggressive behaviors. Seven appendices offer a sample ten-week calendar plan, a sample public service poster, and evaluation forms. Contains 40 references. (RJM)

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Develop and Implement a Conflict Resolution Program to Enhance the Coping Skills of Parents of Adolescents

by

Marva Springer

Cohort 10F

A Practicum Report Presented to the
Master's Program in Child Care, Youth Care, and Family Support
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of Master of Science

Nova Southeastern University

1996

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Abstract

Enhancing coping skills of parents of adolescents in conflict situations. Springer, Marva J. A., 1995: Practicum Report, Nova Southeastern University, Master's Program for Child Care, Youth Care, and Family Support. Descriptors: Conflict Resolution program/ Parent Workshop/ Parent Training/ Parent Adolescent Relationships/ Parent Adolescent Conflict/ Parent's Ability to Resolve Conflict/ Agency Support and Supervision.

The break down in parent/adolescent relationships, and the increase in disruptive behaviors by adolescents, have become a major concern of parents and professionals. Meanwhile, parents continue to practice poor communication skills and to mete out harsh punishment to their adolescents.

The author reviewed the current literature, and designed and implemented a conflict resolution program intended to enhance the coping skills of parents of adolescents. The strategy comprised teaching parents communication and problem solving skills. It was conducted through a training workshop; a home support/ guidance segment designed to monitor and assist parents as they practiced the skills; and a follow-up evaluation session.

The strategy enhanced parent-adolescent relationships and promoted a partnership between parents and agency staff. Responses of both parents and professionals to the program were excellent. Results from verbal reports, an attendance record, and a rating scale questionnaire showed an increase in parents' knowledge, attitudes and behaviors at the end of the program. All of the parents who attended the workshop expressed an increase in self awareness and respect for their adolescents. Overall, results showed an increased use of problem solving techniques by parents, and a decrease in adolescent rebellion within the home.

The program has been incorporated into the practicum agency's training program, where a minimum of six conflict resolution training programs will be held each year. A conflict resolution training curriculum will also be developed and introduced to other agencies six months after completion of this program. Appendices include a ten week calendar plan, a sample public service poster, a sample workshop curriculum, a sample registration form, a sample workshop evaluation form, a sample attendance record and, a sample rating scale questionnaire form.

Authorship Statement

I hereby testify that this paper and the work it reports are entirely my own. Where it has been necessary to draw from the work of others, published or unpublished, I have acknowledged such work in accordance with accepted scholarly and editorial practice. I give testimony freely, out of respect for the scholarship of other workers in the field and in the hope that my own work, presented here, will earn similar respect.

July 29th 1996 — Date

Signature of Student

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Chapter I

Introduction and Background

This chapter describes the setting in which the problem occurs. It offers some background information on the organization and identifies some limitations of current programs. It also highlights the student's role in the setting.

The Setting in Which the Problem Occurred

This Non-Profit Parenting Organization started in 1972, in response to needs identified by parents and concerned professionals in the community for parenting skills. Its existence coincided with the massive migration of parents to Britain, Canada and the United States of America. Many of whom had left their children behind to be cared for by their grandparents and other family members.

The Organization is governed by a voluntary Executive Committee and is administered by a Director. It employs six personnel including: one psychologist, two social workers, one community worker, one trainer, and a maid. Technical assistance is also provided by twenty professional volunteers.

The Organization is the only one of its kind in the country, and provides services to the entire population of two hundred and sixty- four thousand, three hundred and seventy- nine (264,379) persons. (1994, Mid-year estimates). The organization offers free services on child development and parenting skills to all

families in Barbados five days a week, with occasional sessions on Saturdays. Parents are referred by other social agencies, Magistrate Courts, or they walk- in off the street.

Services offered are as follows: A drop-in center where family guidance and counseling are offered in both individual and group settings; community outreach to the entire population, using the print and electronic media; training workshops and seminars to parents, youth and professionals. The Organization is funded entirely from grants, voluntary contributions, a small government subvention, fund raising activities and membership drives. It recognizes the critical role parents play in their children's lives, and seeks to help them become competent and responsible providers and nurturers. It is designed to promote positive family life by enhancing the parenting skills of parents and guardians.

The Organization's programs are based on the following beliefs, that in order to perform their child rearing roles efficiently: parents should be exposed to the relevant information and ideas on effective parenting techniques and methods; parents need support and reinforcement in developing positive behaviors and attitudes toward parenting; and, parenting skills can be learned.

The Student's Role in the Setting

I have been Agency Director for the past six years, with full responsibility

for administration, program development and implementation. The past six years were spent developing and implementing a range of programs and workshops for parents and adolescents. Workshop topics focused on: delaying first pregnancy among teenagers, encouraging male responsibility in the home, and promoting effective parenting skills.

My involvement with governmental social agencies led to the establishment of an effective interagency network. This collaborative effort helped to maximize the services of the limited resource persons in the field, and provided the opportunity to share and discuss new strategies for improved programming.

My accomplishments over the years can be attributed to my close working relationship with members of the Executive Committee, their confidence in my ability to share the agency's vision and to get things done.

The organization has always responded to the needs of families, and is in an excellent position to execute programs aimed at enhancing parent-adolescent relationships.

Chapter II

The Problem

This chapter examines information gathered from parents and social agency professionals, to explain among other things, the types of conflicts that exist between parents and their adolescents. It also examines why some parents abuse their power, and why the parent education programs being offered, have not significantly helped them to manage family conflicts.

The analysis is then extended to consider what writers in the field have to say about conflict in general, and parent-adolescent conflict in particular.

Problem Statement

In Barbados, the heightened awareness of parent-adolescent conflict and the increase in adolescent criminal behaviors have become a public concern. The argument advanced to correct this problem, is that parents ought to use more corporal punishment to control their adolescents. This socially accepted behavior of inflicting corporal punishment may well be seen as a cultural phenomenon that has never been challenged, even though, it continues to perpetuate antisocial behaviors among adolescents.

It is worth noting, that in Barbados, very little research has been done on the outcome of physical harm to adolescents. However, Carter (1993) writes, "The

general perception is that crime, especially violent crime, is on the increase and that young people are in large measure responsible...." (p.4). In 1993, it was reported that many prison inmates showed the scars on their backs which they sustained at the hands of their parents (Murray, 1993, p.12). The majority of Barbadian parents are very good providers and nurturers to their children, yet they share the view that a firm hand is needed to raise a well disciplined child. It is in this context that many parents, have made a call for a more positive approach to address the problem.

Each year, more than one thousand parents come to the organization to gain knowledge about child development, and to improve their parenting skills. Community outreach work also brings the agency staff in contact with approximately five thousand parents a year. More than 60% of these parents have adolescent children who exhibit disruptive behaviors, such as fighting, stealing and teen pregnancy. These behaviors sometimes present a power struggle between parents and adolescents for several reasons: (1) adolescents challenge parental authority, (2) parents abuse their power, and (3) parents are not equip to deal with these conflicts.

To address these demands, programs are offered at the community level, the work place, the social clubs and parent teacher organizations. Topics include

stress management, child development and parenting skills. Although the response is overwhelming, many of the parents exposed to this information express their inability to translate their new knowledge into practice. One parent said, that although she is aware of the developmental stages and the mood swings of adolescence, when her 16-year-old daughter ignores her orders and becomes rebellious, her first reaction is to hit her. Another mother of a 15-year-old son, expressed her frustration and anger when her son spends too much time with "undesirable friends."

The above scenarios and the many others expressed by parents, reinforce the need for communication and problem solving skills for parents who experience conflicts with their adolescents.

Literature Review

Conflicts exist when there are differences of opinion or a clash in values, needs and expectations (Ing & Gabor, 1988). Since parents and adolescents will have different points of view, conflict will occur. Kramer (1987) writes, "Whatever the reason, conflict or the inability to handle it is a major source of problems in most relationships" (p.77).

Within the past five years, social agencies in this country witnessed an increase in the number of reported cases of parent-adolescent conflicts, associated

with physical and verbal abuse by parents to their children (based on the Annual Reports of the Child Care Board, the Probation Department, and the Welfare services, 1994, 1995). Some view these occurrences as a result of damaging and dysfunctional parent-child interaction (Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980).

While we recognize that families respond to conflict in different ways, it is important to remember that conflicts that are resolved using the win-win approach, can sometimes be far healthier for families than parents think. This win-win approach, will help children and parents develop coping skills for future conflict situations (Gordon, 1970). Steinberg & Levine (1990) writes, "conflict harms family relationships when it takes the form of personality attack and power struggles" (p. 33).

It is often said that conflict begins almost at birth, and if incorrectly managed, will create difficulty for parents when their children reach adolescence. Recognizing therefore that conflict is a prerequisite for growth and change, parents of adolescents will sometimes find this stage extremely challenging, particularly, if they are not prepared for the drastic and sometimes traumatic changes that adolescents go through. Those who study adolescents, primarily in schools and home settings, have found that the most unstable episodes experienced by adolescents will pass if managed correctly (Havighurst, 1972; Lipsitz, 1979; &

Ogbu, 1981). We are also reminded that adolescents who rebel against parental control still expect parents to be supportive (Coleman & Coleman, 1984). Studies also show that the majority of young people pass through life without experiencing major turmoil (Heath, 1977; Howard, 1981). Given these perspectives of the developmental challenges encountered by adolescents, parents should provide a caring and supportive atmosphere so their adolescent can discover their own identity, form their own values, and define their own roles.

These changes which adolescents experience as they try to understand their roles, define their boundaries, and set goals, can sometimes be obstructed by parents who are not prepared to give adolescents their own autonomy. Galinsky (1993) reminds us that, "Often there is a conflict between parent and child, at its very hub is an expectation that the child should be acting differently" (p.142). We are also told that many of the negative confrontations between parents and adolescents are often related to inappropriate adult responses (Braun, 1991). Silverberg & Steinberg (1987) writes, " The onset and progression of puberty is associated with high levels of parent child distance, adolescent assertiveness and adolescent influence on family decision" (P.658).

As noted earlier, conflicts arise when adolescents assert their authority or challenge parental authority (Olson, 1984). Of course, some situations are more

vulnerable than others, particularly when parents have a strong psychological investment in their role as a parent (Silverberg & Steinberg 1987). We should also bear in mind that conflicts may occur when there are differences in values and expectations, and that these and other unresolved differences can contribute to adolescent rebellion and disappointed parents.

We are reminded that at the heart of good parent-child relations are effective interpersonal communication skills and problem solving techniques (Gordon, 1973; Ing & Gabor, 1988). The conditions necessary for effective communication include a caring attitude, recognition of ones feelings, the ability to listen and the willingness to self disclose (Gordon 1988).

Gamble & Gamble (1982) identify three types of conflict: content, value and ego conflict. Content conflicts occurs when individuals disagree on issues, such as career or educational choices. Value conflicts surface when each person believes his/her own value is right. Ego conflicts are identified when parents and adolescents allow their egos to cloud their judgement about a particular issue. Robin (1979) provides a similar parallel to Gamble & Gamble (1982), he identified two types of conflict: Issues and Themes. Robin (1979) also mentions, that disagreements can emerge over issues such as homework or chores, but, these disputes usually occur around the adolescent's growing independence and

subsequent rebellion, this is called the theme.

Robin (1979) identifies three elements that contribute to parent-adolescent conflicts: (1) behavioral skill's deficiency; (2) inappropriate attitudinal responses; and (3) negative family interaction patterns. It is believed that parents' inability to deal with certain social skills or attitudes can be damaging their adolescents; particularly, as the adolescents moves from childhood to adulthood. This difficult process can cause the adolescent to be fearful of making decisions, especially, if he or she sees the parent as being all knowing and all powerful.

Reuter & Conger (1995) support the approach advanced by Robin (1979). They also suggest that parent-adolescent conflict is determined by family context: where the impact of conflict on the parent-adolescent relationship threatens the successful development of the adolescent; and can impact negatively on parent-adolescent relationships.

Reference is also made of three conflict models presented by Pruitt & Gahagan, (1974); the aggressor-defender model, the conflict spiral model, and the structural-change model (Zanden, 1987).

The above information supports the view that the developmental changes adolescent go through are entirely natural and necessary, and that parents who are unable to accept these changes can bring about negative responses and subsequent

conflict.

Documentation of the Problem

In response to public demands for parenting skills that work, and to determine parents and professionals attitudes and beliefs about parent-adolescent conflict, two focus groups were conducted. The first focus group comprised agency professionals who shared their concerns about the increasing number of parent-adolescent problems, and the lack of agency resources to effectively deal with these issues. They also addressed the role and responsibility of the agencies regarding parent-adolescent conflict, and the need for training parents in conflict resolution skills.

Agency professionals identified three underlying causes for conflicts among parents and their adolescents : parents' controlling behavior, parents' lack of respect for their adolescents, and parents' lack of knowledge in conflict resolution.

The second focus group comprised of parents drawn from the social agencies and the public. They discussed parent-adolescent relationships, how parents handle conflict, and the effectiveness of existing training programs offered to parents. This group agreed that parent-adolescent conflicts exist, and that a large percentage of parents are using physical punishment and verbal abuse to control theses conflicts.

Parents cited a number of anti-social behaviors exhibited by adolescents in general, and requested that training in communication and problem solving techniques be offered to all parents; and that agency staff to play a more caring and supportive role .

The findings from these focus group discussions, centered more on parental control and adolescents obedience. Reaction from both focus groups showed that the current training programs offered to parents, do not adequately provide them with the tools to effectively handle conflict.

The evidence that parent-adolescent conflicts exist, and that a large percentage of parents are using physical punishment to resolve conflicts has been expressed by the parents and professionals interviewed, and supported by local research (Carter, 1994). This concern regarding parent-adolescent conflict is well documented in the above literature.

Analysis of the Problem

Poor parenting skills, ineffective communication and inadequate problem solving techniques were cited as significant indicators of parent-adolescent conflicts. These variables affect families differently, particularly, those who are not aware of adolescents' need for autonomy. This controlling behavior presents a challenge to parents who are strict disciplinarians and those who have unrealistic expectations of their adolescents. Agencies should be prepared to help parents resolve these conflicts by providing them with information and guidance on group and individual basis.

Research shows that the use of punitive measures to discipline adolescents often result in physical injuries, and many forms of antisocial behaviors such as: running away from home, disrespect for parents, and criminal activities (Welsh, 1974). Gelles and Straus (1988) on the effects of child abuse and neglect, reveal that abused children were two or three times more likely than other children to be involved in antisocial behaviors. According to Pagelow (1984), " victims of all types of family violence share a common experience of denigration of self that results in diminished self esteem ."The connection between this negative form of parenting and adolescents' behavior is well documented, and will be taken into consideration as an intervention strategy is developed for parents of adolescents.

The focus group discussions also showed that parents' controlling behavior sometimes resulted in unresolved conflicts between parents and their adolescents. Some extremes were cited where adolescents perceived themselves as strangers in their own homes and acted accordingly. One parent noted, that her adolescent daughter has a tendency to leave home for long periods at a time, without telling any one where she is going. This disrespectful behavior often results in physical punishment to her daughter.

It has often been said that such negative reactions from parents can resuit in physical or psychological injury to their adolescent, and can create serious conflicts between parents and their adolescents. Carter (1994) writes, "they are now more openly rebellious, less manageable, and sometimes resort to truancy or criminal behaviors" (p.20).

Parents need to be reminded that their children's survival depend on shifting away from a model of domination, toward a partnership model based on collaboration (Eisler, 1988). The benefits that can be derived from such an open relationship are well documented and are worth working toward (Olson, 1984). Since parenting is a learned behavior, those parents who remain locked in to the authoritarian method of discipline, are less likely to realize the value of resolving conflict in a win-win situation than those who are open to change

(Vanpelt 1984; Gordon, 1976)). Some parents complained of being trapped into positions, where they are forced to exert their authority in order to win. Such occurrences can lead to harsh punishment to the adolescent (Kopp, 1993).

Parents should be reminded that the transition between childhood and adulthood can be traumatic for some adolescents (Kutner, 1981; Fontana, 1990; & Freiberg, 1992), and the use of effective communication and problem solving techniques will make the transition easier. Critical to this transition is an adolescent's sense of identity (Erikson, 1968), which reinforces the need for parents to respect their adolescents' values.

However, if parents are not comfortable with this shift from childhood to adulthood, their own identity can also be threatened. Galinsky (1993) writes, "Parents images grow out of their own past how their striving for their own separate identity were handled or how they wish they had been handled" (p.271). Parents are cautioned, that if they are able to manage their own confusion, parenthood would be more satisfying (Galinsky, 1993).

The above information shows that parent-adolescent conflict is inevitable, and that the demand exists for services to deal with these conflicts. It also indicates that parents, and the general public are looking for strategies to resolve these conflicts as they arise.

Documented evidence shows, that public and private social services do not offer conflict resolution programs to parents of adolescents. They continue to address family conflicts from a traditional approach. For example, the mandate for the Child Care Board is limited to "Protection, Care and Custody" issues, The Probation Department provides "Supervision and Rehabilitation," The Welfare Departments offers "National Assistance and Family Counseling." These and other agencies lack the ancillary services, such as, training programs for parents, community outreached programs, and home supervision and guidance to parents of adolescents.

Other contributing factors that hinder agencies from providing conflict management to parents in this country, have been identified as: inadequate funding, insufficient staff, and the limited number of individuals trained in conflict management. It has also been observed that because agency roles are clearly defined, any change suggested is often met with resistance.

In some instances, professionals within these agencies experience incongruence between agency's expectations and the needs of the families being served. Some social workers expressed their frustration regarding their inability to adequately provide parents with the requisite communication, and problem solving skills. They also believe that parents should be allowed to develop these skills at

their own pace, and in their own environment, with some assistance and guidance from case workers.

As mentioned earlier, the parent prevention and support services offered by the agencies do not adequately address conflict resolution among parents and their adolescents. A review of parent education programs in Barbados, showed that all current programs focus on short term workshop training, with heavy emphasis on early child development issues, human sexuality, and health related matters. Although the services are well utilized by parents, some serious flaws exist: (1) limited number of counselors and psychologist who are trained in adolescent behaviors, (2) no professionally trained mediators working within the agencies, (3) the absence of family support workers attached to the agencies, and (4) the absence of conflict resolution training programs.

The over burdened agencies, coupled with the increasing number of parent-adolescent problems, reflect the need to rethink the objectives of parent education. It is imperative therefore, to develop appropriate tools and approaches aimed at improving and expanding parenting programs.

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The intention is to place conflict resolution skills at the core of the parent training programs, where it can impact on parents' behavior, and address the multiple social issues that affect their adolescents.

Chapter III

Goal and Objectives

The goal of this practicum was to design and implement a conflict resolution program to enhance the coping skills of parents of adolescents. The program strategy comprised teaching and the application of communication and problem solving skills delivered to parents through: a two-day training workshop; a home support/ guidance segment; and a follow-up Evaluation session.

Objectives

(1) To develop a conflict resolution skill-based program for parents of adolescent within the ten-week implementation period.

Outcome: A program was developed and a written curriculum made available (See Appendix A).

(2) To develop an evaluation tool to assess parents' competence.

Outcome: Verbal reports and anecdotes were obtained, an attendance record was developed (See Appendix F), and a rating scale Questionnaire was designed specifically for the program and used to assess parents' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors (See Appendix G).

(3) To conduct a conflict resolution program for thirty parents of adolescents.

Outcome: Twenty-five parents of adolescents participated in the

program (See Appendix C).

(4) To increase parents competence to deal with conflict situations with their adolescents.

Outcome: Twenty-five parents of adolescents increased their level of competence to deal with conflict situation with their adolescents, measured through their knowledge, attitudes and behaviors (See Appendix G).

Chapter IV

Solution Strategy

The conceptual framework of the solution strategy drew on the prevention model developed by Gordon (1973) ,Parent Effectiveness Training, and the intervention strategy outlined by Ing & Gabor (1988). The curriculum outline borrowed from several sources; verbal reports, anecdotes, an attendance record, and a rating scale questionnaire were used to assess the program.

Review of Existing Programs, Models, and Approaches

Traditionally, parent-adolescent relationship models placed emphasis placed on the individual behavior of the child. However, contemporary models focus on strengthening the relationships between parent and child through mutual respect. This contemporary approach to manage parent-adolescent conflict has resulted in the provision of a wide range of alternative strategies and programs as highlighted in Chapter Two. The literature also supports the importance of training parents in conflict resolution, and sees it as a vehicle for shaping parents negative behaviors, and to improve their relationship with their adolescents.

At the heart of this approach, is the view that parents and adolescents are interdependent and will experience problems that need to be resolved (Arkes, & Hammond, 1988).

Many writers support parent training as a preventative strategy for increasing parents' ability to resolve conflicts. A large number of these training programs emphasize the importance of conflict resolution training (Gordon, 1974; Johnson, & Johnson, et al, 1994). Guiliano (1994) highlights the use of creative educational techniques to promote the use of conflict resolution and community partnership through peer education.

Other writers analyzed the effectiveness of conflict resolution training and intervention where participant's are encouraged to process the knowledge with the assistance of case workers (Ing & Gabor, 1988). Conflict resolution can also be resolved through training in therapeutic settings (Robin, 1979), and through the process of mediation.

Robin (1979) developed a short term behavioral oriented treatment program, and a problem solving communication training program for dealing with parent-adolescent conflict. The program is designed to teach family members (1) effective skills for seeking independence, (2) methods of communicating without antagonizing and alienating each other, (3) methods for resolving disputed issues, (4) ways of identifying, challenging, and restructuring inappropriate attitudes, (5) methods for relating in an adult-adult manner rather than an adult-child manner.

Robin (1979) study reveals, that problem solving, and communication

training produced gains in verbal problem solving, and a reduction in family disputes, when compared to those parents who attended the non behavioral family therapy sessions.

Parent training in conflict resolution has been widely used; Gordon (1976) identifies an approach to conflict resolution, based on a no-lose method. This approach uses communication and problem solving techniques to enhance parent-child relationships. Gordon (1988) outlines a number of practical approaches parents can use to resolve conflicts with their children. The following steps identified are: (1) defining the problem in terms of needs, (2) generating possible solutions, (3) deciding on mutually acceptable solutions, (4) implementing the problem and (5) evaluating the solution.

This problem solving approach requires certain communication skills which are identified as Active listening, Sending "I" messages, and Changing behavior by changing the environment. Gordon (1976) discusses, some of the positive factors he believes impact on parental effectiveness as they nurture their children. He provides an excellent model for enhancing parent-child conflict, where emphasis is placed on the win-win approach to resolve conflicts

(pp. 193-216).

Dinkmeyer, & McKay (1983) Systematic Training of Effective Parenting

offered a similar program to Gordon's (1976) Parenting Effectiveness Training, and illustrated the use of Active listening. The (STEP) program helps parents to relate positively to their children by checking the goals of their own behavior, and those of their children as well. This is accomplished by keeping check on their own feelings and reactions about the child's behavior, which can impact on the child's responses. This approach reinforces the need for parents to be aware of their own limitations, so they do not over react when certain demands are made.

Guilano (1994) details a program which focuses on violence prevention among school age boys. The approach used creative educational techniques and community partnership to promote the use of conflict resolution. Although this process was designed for youth, its principles are the same and can be applied to the parent adolescent dilemma.

Powell (1991) cites Long (1976) conflict cycle model to explain the dynamics of conflict and power struggles. Powell (1991), used the conflict cycle model to develop a strategy for practitioners to better understand the dynamics of power struggles and conflict. This model allows adults to focus on the child's feelings and behaviors while monitoring their own.

The underlying assumption of the model is, that young people are better understood when the following components are taken into consideration: self

concept, world view and values. If these growth needs are not adequately met during the child's formative years, they can impact negatively when the child is placed in a stressful situation. Although Powell (1991) applied this model to the youth workers within an institutional setting, it can be extremely useful in the parent-adolescent situation.

"Help for parents" (Rattray,1995), was designed in Jamaica, West Indies, to help parents cope with conflicts in the home by teaching them growth and development, communication and problem solving skills. Its philosophical base was derived from the (STEP) program alluded to in this chapter. It encourages parents to examine the changing developmental roles of their adolescents as well as their own. Although this program is in its infancy stage, Rattray (1995) notes, that "parents participation has been overwhelming, and they have begun to show an increased ability to identify problem areas, and to apply their problem solving skills"(p.2).

Ing & Gabor (1988) added another strategy for managing parent-adolescent conflict. They suggest that case workers be involved in a process where families are taught conflict resolution skills through a series of workshops, coupled with individual guidance and support. Ing & Gabor (1988) make the assumption that training workshops would be inadequate if presented on

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their own, and suggested that parents be allowed to process the information in their own home environment, under the supervision of the case workers. Ing & Gabor (1988) saw this training/intervention strategy as an excellent model for parents of adolescents.

In addition to the above mentioned strategies, mediation is used to resolved parent-adolescent conflict. Mediation may be described as a process which focuses on specific elements of behavior, and utilizes negotiation as a strategy for resolving the existing conflict. Mediation creates an environment where parents and adolescents can talk freely and negotiate through demonstration and practice (Merry, 1987). Mediation is an excellent method in which a third party facilitates and coordinates the negotiations of disputing parents and adolescents.

Extensive work has been done in the United States of America on mediation programs for families in general, and parents of adolescents in particular. The San Francisco Community Board Program (1990), is an excellent example for a mediation program. It offers a comprehensive six - step action plan, where a conflict resolution curriculum and an implementor is placed in each school. The overall goal is to teach mediation skills to parents and students in order to increase their ability and to resolve conflicts in a peaceful environment.

In an article, Malia, Cunningham, MacMillan , & Wynn (1995) examine the

family policy infrastructure that deals with family conflicts. They proposed that changes in family policy can facilitate the development of problem solving skills and improve justice for families. Malia et al (1995) note that, "Mediation is a dispute resolution strategy that is consistent with the principles of an expanded framework that provide a potential means for implementing that new policy infrastructure." (p.3)

Malia et al (1995) note, that a theoretical foundation is needed to examine how conflict management can lead to important situational and developmental changes in family systems. Malia et al (1995) proposed three theoretical perspectives: conflict Theory, systems theory, and developmental theory to conceptualize conflict and the policy infrastructure.

As mentioned in Chapter Two, a significant number of parenting programs are conducted by Governmental and Non Governmental agencies in this country. These programs provide parents with useful information on child rearing practices and child development, but very little information is given on conflict resolution.

Within the Caribbean region, there are fourteen countries involved in a collaborative effort to provide parenting skills to families. This program consists of thirty-seven trainers, and two hundred and eight facilitators who were trained to conduct workshops for parents in their respective countries. The training was

conducted from a manual: "Pathways to Parenting a Caribbean Approach."

This training manual addresses parenting issues including conflict management, however, the conflict resolution segment is defined within the general context of the program, and does not provide enough scope for parents to assimilate or practice the skills. Evaluation results showed that a large percentage of the 2,500 parents who participated in this parent training program, have asked for skills to manage the conflicts that exist between them and their adolescents. This information, coupled with the findings in Chapter Two, support the case for conflict management skills to be taught to parents of adolescents in this country and in the Caribbean region as a whole.

Description of Solution Strategy

Introduction

A curriculum was designed and a conflict resolution program was developed and implemented for parents of adolescents living in Barbados. The present analysis tested the hypotheses that: (1) parent-adolescent relationships would improve through parents' awareness and application of communication and problem skills; (2) parents' competence would increase if they are exposed to communication and problem solving skills in a training workshop, and home support/guidance program. The methods used to gather information for this

program included a literature review, and focus group meetings of professionals and parents.

Conceptual Framework. After a thorough review of several conflict resolution models and approaches, coupled with the recommendations of the two focus groups. The conceptual framework for this prevention and intervention strategy was developed, it drew on: the training of trainers model developed and conducted by Gordon (1973), in his Parent Effectiveness Training program.

From his research, Gordon (1976) found the use of communication, and problem solving to be effective strategies to resolve conflicts where every one comes out the winner. On the other hand, the intervention strategy outlined by Ing & Gabor (1988) takes the training concept further. They suggest that conflict resolution skills be taught within the social agencies through training that is reinforced with a support and home visits program.

Program Curriculum. The curriculum was adapted from several sources: (1) a curriculum on conflict resolution and mediation developed by Sadalla, Holmberg, and Halligan (1990) of the San Francisco Community Board. This curriculum was developed for elementary school children it uses pictorial representations, lecture/discussions and group participation; (2) a curriculum on parenting developed by Parenting Partners (1993). This curriculum was developed for

trainers who work with parents, it focuses on the learner-centered approach and includes lecture/discussions, role play and video presentations; and (3) regional parenting workshops, which offered a variety of Caribbean approaches and techniques (See Appendix C).

Conflict Resolution Program. The program was implemented over a ten-week period and comprised a training workshop, a home support program, and a follow-up evaluation session. The program offered parents of adolescents skills-building exercises in communication and problem solving.

As a prevention and early intervention model it provided parents of adolescents with conflict resolution skills, and allowed them to practice these skills in their home environment with the support of the case worker.

Selection of Participants. One week prior to the commencement of the program thirty parents of adolescents were selected from a total of forty-five referrals. Although the selection was not randomized, the participants were well represented in terms of socio-economic, age distribution and household status. During the workshop registration it was discovered that five of the participants who registered were parents of children under the age of thirteen. This sampling error occurred when some of the employers replaced the selected parents with other parents whose children were under the age of thirteen years. The sample size was

therefore reduced to twenty-five.

The select group comprised of African Caribbean parents (Twenty-four women and one man) of low and middle income families who were drawn from the practicum agency, other social agencies, the general public and business sector. (Demographic information can be found in Table 2). Also, the workshop was observed by six professionals from other social agencies and the five parents whose children were under the age of thirteen.

Measurements. Program results were obtained through verbal reports, anecdotes, an attendance record, and a rating scale questionnaire. Verbal reports and anecdotes supplied data on parents' perceptions of the overall program. The attendance record provided information on the activities conducted during the support/guidance segment.

A rating scale questionnaire with 37 statements, of two, three, and four response categories was used to measure parents' knowledge, attitudes and behaviors at the end of each phase of the program. The rating scale questionnaire was developed to cover the basic components that were taught in the program, and provided participants with a range of responses (See Appendix G).

Instructional Material. Workshop materials consisted of a series of interrelated lesson-plans which were designed to teach communication and problem solving skills to parents of adolescents. The use of an overhead projector, flip charts, markers and audio-tape presentations contributed to learning.

Activities. To encourage total participation and to enhance learning, activities were presented in a cultural and experiential manner. The activities included warm-up familiarization exercises, such as dance, role play (acting-out real life situations), group decision making exercises and lecture discussions.

Training workshop. A two-day workshop was held for twenty five parents of

adolescents. It was facilitated by the practicum writer and a staff member from the practicum agency. The workshop agenda focused on communication and problem solving skills as strategies for resolving conflict and consisted of the following topics: (1) " Identifying Feelings," which looked at how feelings impact on our behaviors, and explored ways of identifying and associating feelings with our experiences; (2) "Sending "I" Messages", examined and illustrated how to own and express feelings in a positive way; (3) "Active Listening", provided participants with ways of listening to messages that are sent without manipulation or distortion; (4) "Conflict", highlighted the types of conflicts and the strategies used to resolved conflict; (5) "Problem Solving" explored different problem solving steps using the win-win approach.

Parents were encouraged to be non-judgmental, and to express their feelings in a non-threatening and democratic way.

Support-Guidance. At the end of the workshop, parents were given two weeks to practice the conflict resolution skills. They were also given appointment cards with scheduled dates on which to visit or call the agency at least twice during the home support/guidance segment. Parents certainly benefited from the individualized support/guidance segment which allowed them to identify, and practice the skills in their own home environment under the supervision of a

professional. During the two weeks they also shared their accomplishments with each other and sought help from the practicum facilitator when needed.

Follow-up/Evaluation. On the ninth and tenth week of the program parents were brought together to: discuss and share their experiences with each other; chose a partner from among the workshop participants; and to complete the program's evaluation form.

Overall, this interactive strategy has enabled parents and their adolescents to express their feelings to each other in a non-threatening way. It also motivated the twenty-five parents of adolescents to process and practice the conflict resolution skills at their own pace, and provided them the opportunity to interact with the agency.

The content, method and delivery of the conflict resolution program engaged parents in self-directed learning, and reduced their controlling behaviors. Finally, parents increased knowledge, attitudes and behaviors helped to bring about behavior change in their adolescents as well. A copy of the ten week calendar plan is found in Appendix A.

Chapter V

Strategy Employed

The solution strategy was designed to enhance parent-adolescent relationships. Twenty-five parents of adolescents were taught communication and problem solving skills in a workshop setting; and were also provided with a supportive environment in which to practice the skills. The solution strategy gave special consideration to the training and prevention program developed by Gordon (1973), and the intervention strategy of Ing & Gabor (1988).

Action Taken

A conflict resolution program was developed and implemented to twenty-five parents of adolescents, and a curriculum was designed (the curriculum content included instructional materials and activities (See Appendix C).

Conflict Resolution Program. The program comprised: a two day workshop, a home support and guidance component, and a follow-up evaluation session Permission to execute the program was obtained from the Executive Committee of the practicum agency. A series of consultation meetings were held with the co-facilitator, these meetings were used to examine program strategy, and to discuss her role in the program.

Letters and fliers were sent to the social agencies and the business sector

inviting them to select one parent to attend the program. Advertisements for the program appeared in the daily newspapers and radio stations free of charge. The program was offered free of charge to twenty-five parents of adolescents. Eight were referred by the practicum agency, eight were from the social agencies, and nine were from the business sector and the general public. The five parents whose children were under the age of thirteen and six professionals from the social agencies were allowed to attend the workshop as observers.

The preparatory activities were carried out as planned with some minor adjustments: (1) the workshop commenced one week late due to the availability of a training room, this delay did not have a lasting effect on the organization of the program, (2) heavy rains prevented six parents from attending the follow-up session. However, they were permitted to complete their evaluation form one week later at the closing ceremony.

Two-day workshop. The twenty-five parents who participated in the entire program, comprised one man, and twenty-four women between the ages of 30 to 49 years. Five were from two-parent families, five were separated, four divorced and eleven single. The following information can be found in Table 2.

Training was conducted in a large room at a training college. The room was well ventilated, chairs were arranged in a circle to encourage social interaction and to accommodate free movement. Snacks and lunch were served on both days, (compliments of the business sector). Equipment such as flip charts, overhead projector, chalk board, video camera, radio and cassettes and other training tools were utilized.

All working sessions were conducted by the practicum author and the co-facilitator who work with the practicum agency. The co-facilitator assisted with the workshop activities, whereas, the lecture/discussions, the processing of information, and evaluation of individual sessions were done by the practicum author.

A participatory method was employed to get participants to experience, reflect, generalize and apply their new knowledge to their every day interactions with their adolescents. Participants drew from their own experiences and shared this information with the group; the use of reflection helped them to internalize and analyze new information, as they developed their own ideas about the topics shared; The generalization strategy, allowed them to draw broader conclusions about the topics and to come up with their own solutions.

This participatory approach created a positive learning environment, and encouraged all participants to express their views quite readily, especially those parents whose adolescents were demonstrating anti-social behaviors.

Other major topics of discussion were the use of corporal punishment, and the difficulty parents envisioned as they move from a position of control, to one that includes the adolescent in the decision-making process.

A brief summary of the program's "Action Plan" is provided in Table 1 (See Appendix A).

Table 1

Summary of the Conflict Resolution Program's Action Plan

Week 1-4:	Preparatory activities
Week 5:	Workshop
Week 6-8:	Support/ Guidance
Week 9:	Follow-up Session/Evaluation
Week 10:	Closing ceremony/Evaluation
	Distribution of certificates

Introductory Session. The workshop opened with an official welcome and an introductory session. Participants were informed about the program's goal and

objectives, and were encouraged to share their own objectives for the program. Other program commitments and expectations were shared and discussed with the participants. They collaboratively generated the following list.

To learn:

1. To communicate better with their adolescents
2. To be better listeners
3. Correct forms of discipline
4. How to understand their adolescents and help them
5. To cope with the mood swings of their adolescents
6 To resolve conflict situations with their children

A supportive and "open" workshop atmosphere was created through the use of "getting-to-know-you" exercises, which encouraged participants to share information with each other. Warm up activities used at the beginning of each session helped to build a positive learning environment. They included cultural songs, dance and story-telling.

Session Two. The second session consisted of a warm-up activity. Where participants listened to different forms of cultural music and expressed their feelings using dance.

Session Three. The third session dealt with "feelings". In the large group,

participants developed a vocabulary of feeling words using a mapping process. This activity was designed to help identify and express feeling words. Each parent was then given two pieces of newsprint on which to draw a negative and a positive experience/event they encountered as an adolescent. The art work was then posted on the wall and each person got a chance to share their experiences and their feelings, and to relate them to their relationship with their adolescents.

This session stimulated much discussion. All of the parents were amazed at the similarity of negative experiences shared. One parent noted that as an adolescent her mother physically abused her. She was often made to stand for long hours in a dark closet while holding two heavy stones. She expressed feelings of anger and resentment toward her mother as she related this story to the group. Interestingly enough, this parent admitted that her method of discipline was similar to that of her mother's, and openly cried when she realized what she was doing to her children. The other parents verbalized great concern over the level of pain their adolescents could be going through as a result of the poor parenting skills being practiced by them.

In regard to the activity, one parent said that she felt somewhat silly when given a marker and pieces of paper to draw on, and was thankful that her work colleagues were not around to see her. She hastily added however, that she

enjoyed the session, and found it to be extremely educational and informative and hoped that every parent could be exposed to it. All of the participants demonstrated a clear understanding of the importance of recognizing and associating feelings with their experiences.

Session Four. The fourth session on "I" messages, allowed parents to accept ownership for their problems and to express their feelings into a positive way. After a brief introduction on "I" messages, and the use of the "I" message formula, participants were arranged in small groups. Each group was asked to make at least two "I" message statements from a list of words given to them. These "I"messages were then shared as the groups worked together.

In the large group, participants looked at their level of communication and interaction while in the small group. This was followed by a general discussion on the differences between "I" messages and "you" messages. During the lunch break participants were overheard using "I" messages to each other in a jovial yet sincere manner.

Session Five. The fifth session focused on "Active Listening". The session opened with a general discussion on what is passive and active listening, and their importance, especially in conflict situations. For the first activity parents were asked to find a partner, each person was then given two minutes to shared an

experience they encountered over the past week. As one spoke the other person listened using "passive listening skills," this continued until both persons had shared using non- verbal communication skills. For the second activity, participants remained with their partners, this time they were asked to repeat the activity using the active listening skills.

This session, generated much discussion, all of the female participants found it difficult to listen and not interrupt their partners, yet they felt great when they were allowed to talk without interruption. Five parents confessed that not being able to speak while their partner was speaking made them feel uncomfortable, and they felt like walking away. The only male parent in the group felt good when his partner who was a woman, listened to him without interruption.

Overall, the participants appreciated the sessions presented on the first day, and were anxious to practice them on their adolescents that evening.

Session Six. The sixth session took up most of the second day, it dealt with conflict, types of conflicts and the approaches to conflict resolution. The conflict cycle model developed by Long (1976) and cited by Powell (1988), was shared with the participants and generated interesting discussion. This exercise drew on the communication skills that were addressed in the previous sessions and laid the

foundation for the problem- solving techniques that followed.

Discussion focused on the participants' views of conflict and how it impacts on their relationship with their adolescents. The group also explored the developmental needs of adolescents and how resolving conflicts using the win-win approach can help to develop their adolescents' self esteem.

During the small group sessions and role plays, participants were extremely self directed as they presented and developed excellent examples of communication and problem solving skills. Scenarios were first presented from real experiences, followed by the positive solutions using the communication and problem solving steps they learned in the workshop. They correctly applied the "I" message formula of "I Feel..." "When you..." "Because..." and " I want...," as they shared their feelings.

Session Seven. This session of the workshop was used to generate discussion regarding parents' willingness to support each other and to develop linkages with the agency staff. Participants chose their own partners from among the group, they exchanged addresses and telephone numbers, and agreed to keep in contact with each other after the workshop.

In preparation for the home support/guidance segment, participants were asked to think of three negative experiences they had with their adolescents, and to

resolve them using the skills they learned at the workshop. Ideas were shared on how to avoid name calling, and other negative behaviors normally used by parents. They were then given appointment cards with scheduled dates and times to contact the facilitators, or visit the agency during the two-week application phase.

Home Support/ Guidance. All of the parents kept their appointments. The practicum facilitator dealt with all visits and phone calls. Sessions ranged from fifteen minutes to one hour depending on the needs of the parents. Attendance records were kept by the facilitator, and a self report on the usefulness of the intervention strategy was conducted.

The above component was designed to give participants time to process the new information in their own home environment, with real situations over a period of time. It allowed them to compare their feelings when using a negative approach versus a positive approach.

Follow-up/evaluation. This segment of the program was conducted during the ninth week of the implementation phase and was held at the training college where the workshop was held. Participants openly shared their successes and problems encountered with their adolescents during the support/guidance segment.

After going through the questionnaire with the participants, they completed the evaluation under the supervision of the facilitator and the co-facilitator. In

order to accommodate those parents who were absent, the group agreed to postpone the distribution of the certificates by one week.

At the end of the tenth week, participants and facilitators met from 3:00.PM until 6:30.PM at the practicum agency, where refreshments were served. Those parents who did not attend the follow-up session were allowed to complete their evaluation forms, and to share their experiences with the others. The facilitators ensured that all of the participants were given the opportunity to share their successes and to identify a home partner.

Results

The conflict resolution program was based on the assumptions that: (1)knowledge of communication and problem solving skills would enhance parent-adolescent relationships, and (2) that these skills would be better internalized and practiced if a training workshop and home support strategy was used. The following data was obtained from verbal reports, anecdotes, the workshop evaluation, the home support/guidance attendance record, and the end of program evaluation. The findings are presented through objectives 1 to 4.

Objective 1. To develop a conflict resolution skill-based program for parents of adolescents Within the ten-week implementation period.

The ten week conflict resolution program was developed and a curriculum was

designed (See Appendix A).

Objective 2. To develop evaluation tools to assess parents competence.

Verbal reports and anecdotal information obtained from parents at various stages of the program revealed that parents knowledge, attitudes and behaviors increased significantly after training and application of the skills. This qualitative data on parents' views of their competencies proved to be very beneficial, and offered accurate information of their feelings and perceptions of the skills. This method allowed parents to speak freely and to expressed their feelings more effectively than on a written questionnaire.

An attendance record provided information on the number of telephone calls, and visits parents made to the agency during the home support/guidance program. The rating scale questionnaire provided data on parents' knowledge, attitudes and behaviors both after the workshop and at the end of the program (See Appendix G).

Objective 3. To conduct a conflict resolution program for thirty parents of adolescents.

A conflict resolution program was conducted for twenty five parents of adolescents (the reduced sample size did not affect the results of the project), under the following categories: training workshop; home support/guidance

program; and follow-up/evaluation.

Results show that the training and intervention strategies were well organized and that parents found the sessions to be valuable. Eight percent (8%) of the parents felt that the program was moderately valuable, 32% found it valuable, and 60% found it very valuable. In response to the questions concerning the organization of the program. Eight percent (8%) felt it was well organized and 92% thought it was very well organized (See question 1 through 5 of Appendix G). The program ensured that the parents had an opportunity to internalize the new knowledge and apply it to their real life situations

The twenty five parents who participated in the program consisted of twenty four women and one man. (Demographic information is provided in Table 2)

Table 2.

Demographics of Parents Who Attended the Conflict Resolution Program

	Pract	Social	Private	Public	Total
	%	%	%	%	%
Agency	32	40	20	8	100
Sex:					
Female	32	36	20	8	96
Male		4			4
Marital Status					
Married	12	-	8	-	20
Single	12	24	4	4	44
Divorce	4	8	4	-	16
Separated	4	8	4	4	20

*Note. N=25 **Pract** = Practicum Agency

Workshop Evaluation. Results show that 100% of participants found the workshop worthwhile, well organized and informative. Seventy one percent (71%) found the sessions to be exciting, and 29% found them to be unique. In question four, when asked to identify three things they learned at the workshop,

96% of the parents identified "Problem Solving", "Sending "I" Messages", "Active Listening" and "Expressing Feelings". However, in question seven, 89% requested more information on conflict resolution and problem solving. Four percent (4%) identified to better understand their adolescent, to be non-judgmental, and to be more tolerant with their adolescent. All of the parents would recommend the program to a friend.

In question seven, 4% of the parents requested more information on communication, and 7% asked for knowledge on adolescent development. One hundred percent (100%) of the participants requested that the workshop be extended and offered to other parents (See Appendix E). Overall, these findings showed that the majority of parents understood the general principles of the communication skills, and that more information was needed on problem solving skills. The results reinforce the point that problem solving is a process that requires practice, reinforcement and collaboration (Gordon, 1976; Ing & Gabor, 1988).

Support Guidance. All of the parents kept their appointments as scheduled. Sessions ranged from fifteen minutes to one hour depending on the needs of the parents. An attendance record was kept by the practicum facilitator who dealt with the parents.

The four main areas of discussion that were introduced during these sessions were: (1) the value and importance of practicing the skills at home; (2) being able to call or visit the agency for assistance; (3) the usefulness of the problem solving and communication skills to resolve conflict with their adolescent; and (3) the changes they noticed in their adolescent during the two weeks. Results show that a 100% of the participants kept their scheduled appointments with the practicum facilitator, to discuss their accomplishments and to seek clarification on particular issues. Eighty percent telephoned, while 20% visited the agency. Sixteen percent found the assistance of a professional valuable and 84% found it extremely valuable. Twenty four percent (24%) found the skills useful and 84% found them very useful.

When asked what changes they noticed in their adolescents, 8% saw no improvement, 32% saw moderate improvement and 60% saw great improvement in their relationships with their adolescents. Verbal reports revealed that parents interacted more with their adolescents, and their adolescents were less hostile toward them. (See Appendix F)

Changes identified included more positive parent-adolescent interaction, and less hostility from their adolescents. The facilitator had anticipated that some change would come about as indicated by (Ing & Gabor, 1988; Florin & Dokecki,

1983), regarding the importance of linking training with a home base program. However, the enthusiasm shared by these parents and their willingness to practice the skills were surprisingly exceptional. Other overwhelming result were the attitudes and behavior changes expressed by the parents and their adolescents. These results, how-ever short term offer great promise for these families, and hopefully with continual support from the practicum agency they will reap long term results.

Objective 4. To increase parents' competence to deal with conflict situation with their adolescents.

Parents' competence was measured by examining their knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors in two contexts: at the end of the workshop and upon completion of the program. A rating scale questionnaire which consisted of a series of statements ranging from negative to positive was used to elicit parents responses at the end of each segment (See Appendix G).

The overall results showed a significant increase in parents' competence as they interacted with their adolescents. Table 3 illustrates parents knowledge of communication and problem solving skills measured through 9 "don't know," "false or true" statements. All of the parents reported an increased knowledge of "Expressing Feelings"; "Sending "I" Messages"; "Active Listening"; and " Problem

Solving". Responses from statement 6, showed that 8% of parents felt their adolescents opinion were of no value, compared to 92% who said their opinions should be valued (See Table 3).

As shown in Table 5, the majority of parents practiced all of the skills. The skill most often used was the expression of feelings using an "I" message. The data suggest that the home support/guidance component had a positive effect on their application of the skills.

The findings from questions 30 through 37 showed that all of the parents' knowledge, attitudes and behaviors of conflict resolution increased significantly. Table 6 presents the mean of parents' responses. It also shows the lowest score of 4.6 where parents noted that expressing their feelings helped them own their problems, compared to the highest score of 4.9 where parents agreed that identifying feelings results in less hostility toward their adolescent.

Among the respondents who said they practice the skills, 40% said sometimes, and 60% said often. They all used "I" messages when expressing their feelings whereas, 40% used them sometimes, and 80% used them often. Respondents were also asked if they paid attention to their own style of dealing with conflict, 8% said never, 32% said sometimes, and 64% said often. Interestingly though, when asked if they demanded total obedience from their adolescents, 20% said never, 48% said sometimes, and 32% said often.

Table 5

Parents Attitudes and Practices Regarding Conflict Resolution Skills

Indicator	Never	Sometimes	Often
22. Express feelings in a positive manner		40%	60%
23. Encourage my adolescent to express feelings		20%	80%
24. Demand total obedience from my adolescent	20%	48%	32%
25. Withdraws love from adolescent when disobedient	16%	20%	64%
26. Use "I" messages when expressing my feelings		80%	20%
27. Allow my adolescent to share his/her viewpoint	8%	24%	68%
28. Listen to what is being said to me without interruption	8%	52%	40%
29. Pay attention to my own style of dealing with conflict	4%	64%	32%

Note *N = 25

Table 4

Percentage Parents' Attitudes and Behaviors Regarding Conflict Resolution

Indicator	Before training	After training
15. Ensures adolescent understands my message	0%	80%
16. Listens for feelings as well as facts when adolescent expresses concern	22%	88%
7. Express feelings whenever I have a problem	8%	92%
18. Accept responsibility for own problems by using an "I" message	20%	80%
19. Work out differences with adolescents cooperatively	36%	64%
20. Overpower my adolescent with shouting	80	20%
21. Have difficulty confronting my adolescent in a positive way during conflict situation	80%	20%

***Note N= 25**

Changes in parents' attitudes and behaviors after the program, were measured through a series of questions ranging from "never" to "often." These responses can be found in questions 22 through 29 and will be presented in Table 5.

Table 3

Percentage of Parents' knowledge of Conflict Situations with their Adolescents

Indicators	% of Correct Responses
6. Adolescents opinions should be valued	92%
7. It is important to listen to adolescent	100%
8. Using "I" messages to convey our feelings help us to focus on self	100%
9. Communication and problem solving skills can be used to resolve conflict	100%
10 Conflict is inevitable	100%
11. Parents are always right	8%
12. Parents and adolescents should respect each other	100%
13. Resolving conflict using the win-win approach improves relationships	100%
14. Parents controlling behavior sometimes leads to rebellion	100%

Note * N = 25

Results were obtained through a series of categorical questions designed to measure parents' attitudes and behaviors, before and after the program (See questions 15 through 21 of Appendix G). The results show a significant increase in parents behaviors: expression of feelings increased from 8% to 92%; The use of problem solving skills increased from 36% to 64%; Results also show an overwhelming decrease from 80% to 20% of parents who shouted at their adolescents. This change in behavior is an important feature in this program, it shows a major shift away from the traditional negative behaviors used by many parents, to a more positive and effective way of communicating with their adolescents.

Table 6

Parents' Perceptions of their Knowledge and Attitudes to Conflict Resolution

Indicators	Average Rating
30. Knowledge gained will help me manage conflict situations with my adolescent	4.5
31. My coping skills have improved after training	4.6
32. Using "I" messages can be difficult at times	4.7
33. Identifying and expressing feelings results in less hostility toward my adolescent	4.9
34. Expressing my feelings helps me to accept my own problems	4.4
35. Disagreement should be discussed and worked through	4.8
36. Problem solving lessens tension	4.7
37. The win-win approach should be encouraged	4.8

*Note N = 25

Chapter VI

Conclusion-Implications and Recommendations

The results show a significant increase in parents' ability to resolve conflict with their adolescents. Findings also show that parents responded positively to the home support/guidance segment.

The quantitative and qualitative data were obtained through the: development and implementation of a conflict resolution program; design and use of evaluation tools; execution of a conflict resolution program for twenty-five parents of adolescents.

Verbal reports and the written evaluations of twenty-five parents of adolescents show an increase in parents' knowledge, attitudes and behaviors, within the context of : a workshop, a home support/guidance segment, and a follow-up evaluation session.

The program content was based on the work of Gordon (1973), and the home support/ guidance segment drew from the intervention strategy of Ing & Gabor (1988). The curriculum content included activities and instructional materials drawn from various sources (See Appendix C). A significant outcome of the program was the use of the experiential learning methodology which incorporated the use of indigenous songs, dance, and participants' own personal

experiences.

Other factors which contributed to the positive outcome of the program are: the invaluable assistance of the co-facilitator; the interactive approach where parents openly shared and discussed their fears and concerns in a group setting; The flexibility and openness with which parents practiced the skills in their own home environment; and parents' ability to share their successes and failures with the agency staff in a non-threatening way.

Results from verbal reports and a sliding scale questionnaire which comprise a series of categorical statements, ranging from negative to positive, were obtained from each segment of the program. They included: a workshop evaluation; an attendance record for the support/ guidance segment; and an end of program evaluation. All evaluation forms were completed.

This method of obtaining results proved useful, it assessed and compared the level of responses, both at the end of the workshop and upon completion of the program. A comparative analysis showed a significant increase in parents' competence at the end of the intervention strategy when compared to the results obtained after the workshop training alone. These results support my belief that parents are more likely to internalize and practice conflict resolution skills, that are taught in a group setting, and are complimented with a home base component.

Such findings are consistent with the results reported on the immediate and long term benefits of workshop training and home intervention (Robin, 1979).

The findings also confirm a significant increase in parents knowledge, attitudes and behaviors as they interacted with their adolescents in their own homes. In addition, there was a noticeable decrease in parents controlling and aggressive behaviors toward their adolescents.

Knowledge of the communication skills rated higher than problem solving skills, both after the workshop and at the end of the program. The greatest impact, relates to the dramatic increase in parents' attitudes and behaviors toward conflict resolution with their adolescents, during the two week intervention period. Many of the parents admitted that their self confidence increased; and the majority were satisfied that expressing their feelings using "I" messages made it easier to use the problem solving skills with their adolescents. Results show, 80% of parents made an effort to work out differences with their adolescents. However, prior to the training, results show that 80% overpowered their adolescents, while at the end of the program, only 20% still overpowered their adolescents. This 60% decrease in parents controlling behavior is to be commended and offers hope for future conflict resolution programs.

Also noteworthy, are the interesting examples shared by parents as they

practiced the skills with their adolescents. For example, one parent said that while practicing the skills she noticed a drastic change in her son's rebellious behavior. She said, that when she questioned him of this behavior, her son replied

"Mum, you have also changed, you have not threatened me recently, and you are actually talking with me and not at me." She said that she cried, because she did realized how her controlling behavior affected him.

During the program, the majority of parents shared similar success stories, and were pleasantly surprise at the effectiveness of the communication and problem solving skills.

Results suggest that a high percentage of parents continue to withdraw love from their adolescents when they are disobedient, and the majority demand total obedience from their adolescents. These results are supported by documented reports on authoritarian parenting and the resultant breakdown in parent-adolescent relationships in this country (Carter, 1993; Murray, 1993).

Throughout the program, the findings show that a small percentage of parents found it difficult to practice the conflict resolution skills (See Table 3). Verbal reports also show that these parents have not learned to accept responsibility for their own problems. One parent reported that, although she did

not physically or verbally abused her son during the support/guidance segment, her need to be in control prevented her from practicing the problem solving skills with him. These and other reports from the parents, support the findings, that despite the increase in parents' conflict resolution skills, parental control remains dominant. This must be understood within the Caribbean context where control signifies obedience, respect for authority, and is seen as a sign of "Good Parenting".

The ten week conflict resolution program served as a useful strategy to enhance parents' competence in communication and problem solving skills. It clearly shows that parents who are exposed to these skills in a workshop and home support setting, with the support of agency personnel can increase their competence.

In general, this practicum project offered the twenty-five parents of adolescents a wide range of communication and problem skills through a workshop, and home intervention setting. It has certainly deepened my understanding of parents desire to resolve conflict with their adolescents. The evaluation results have also helped to quantify and reinforce the need for conflict resolution training for all parents of adolescents in Barbados, particularly, since there is no documented evidence on the existence of such a program in this

country.

Future Plans-Development

The results of the ten week solution strategy will be used as a stepping stone to enhance the continuation of conflict resolution programs within the practicum agency. This will require additional planning, further research, the dedication and commitment of the social agencies, as well as the policy-makers, and the funding agencies.

A summary of the program's results will be presented to the agency's Executive Committee, members of staff and other agency personnel. The program will be incorporated into the agency's parenting education program. Approximately six training programs will be conducted next year and it is hoped that this number will increase over time.

Since the completion of this program, The practicum agency has received several request from consulting firms and individual groups to conduct the conflict resolution program with parents and secondary school teachers.

To support the continuation and effectiveness of the program, additional training will be made available to the staff of the social agencies. This training will equipped agency staff with the necessary conflict management skills that would enable them to take full advantage of the program.

This approach is easy to administer, and relatively cost-effective. Such a shift in emphasis will reduce the number of hours spent on individual counseling, and will certainly help parents develop long term coping skills to increase their self worth and improve parent-adolescent relationships.

It will also strengthen inter-agency collaboration and allow agencies to reach a larger number of parents with the skills. Another advantage of inter-agency network is that each agency can use the skills in their own setting, with small or large groups as the need arises.

From a regional perspective, when the curriculum and the program is further developed, they will be shared with other Caribbean Social Agencies, and resource professionals. Some agencies have already expressed an interest in the program and are eagerly awaiting the results.

It is also hoped that the qualitative and quantitative data gathered over the next six months will be used to strengthen the program. Further research will also be done to address the needs of those parents who are resistant to change, and who exhibit strong controlling behaviors. Such research will certainly help us to understand and appreciate these cultural differences, and to develop indigenous programs that can address the needs of our Caribbean parents.

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Appendix A

Sample: Ten Week Calendar Plan

Calendar Plan for Implementation Activities

Goal: To assist parents of adolescents to develop Conflict Resolution skills

Objectives	Action Plan	Outcome	Responsibility	Time
1. To develop a conflict resolution skill-based program for parents of adolescents within a ten week implementation period.	• Obtain approval for the program from the Agency's Executive Committee.	Approval was obtained from the Agency Executive Committee	Author of practicum proposal	Week 1
	•Develop a training curriculum and program schedule.	A skill-based program was developed and a written curriculum is available		Week 1-3
	• Prepare a budget for the program.	The budget was submitted		Week 3

Goal: To assist parents of adolescents to develop Conflict Resolution skills

Objectives	Action Plan	Outcome	Responsibility	Time
2. To develop the evaluation tools of a verbal self-report, attendance record, and a rating scale questionnaire, for the conflict resolution program.	●Research the literature on the development and structure of verbal self reports and rating scale methods. ●To systematically record parents' attendance and comments obtained during each session of the program.	The development of three evaluation tools which obtained demographic and anecdotal information, and data on parent's knowledge, attitudes and behaviors during the 10 week conflict resolution program.	Author of the practicum proposal	Week 3 Week 5-9

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Goal: To assist parents of adolescents to develop Conflict Resolution skill

Objectives	Action Plan	Outcomes	Responsibility	Time
3. To conduct a conflict resolution program for thirty parents of adolescents divided into a two day workshop, a home support segment, and a follow-up session.	**Program:** ●Recruit and select participants for the program and secure their commitment. ●Arrange and confirm dates, times, and venues. **Workshop:** ●Advertise the workshop in the print and electronic media.	Thirty parents of adolescents, selected from the practicum agency, other social agencies, and the general public participated in the program. Advertisement appeared in the print and electronic media.	Author of the practicum report and the co-facilitator.	Week 5 Week 5

Goal: To assist parents of adolescents to develop Conflict Resolution skills

Objectives	Action Plan	Outcomes	Responsibility	Time
3. Continued	● Conduct a two-day workshop ● Ensure that parents needs are meet during the workshop.	Twenty-five parents of adolescents attended.	Author of practicum proposal and co-facilitator	Week 5
	Home Guidance and Support ● Provide a supportive environment for parents of adolescents as they practice the skills learned in the workshop. ● Keep an attendance record of participants and their needs.	Twenty-five parents of adolescents were encouraged to attend or call the organization during the life of program.		Week 6- 8

Goal To Assist Parents of Adolescents to Develop Conflict Resolution Skills

Objectives	Action Plan	Outcome	Responsibility	Time
3 Continued	Follow up Session ●Reconfirm venue, dates and time	Venues were confirmed	Author of the practicum	Week 9
	●Ensure that all participants attend the Session	Twenty-five participants attended the session		Week 9
	●Provide a forum for discussion where participants can share their accomplishments and failures in a safe environment	Workshop environment was very relaxed		Week 9

Goal: To Assist Parents of Adolescents to Develop Conflict Resolution Skills

Objectives	Action Plan	Outcomes	Responsibility	Time
4 To assess parents' competence in dealing with conflict situations with their adolescents, through the use of a rating scale questionnaire	To: ●Inform participants of the purpose of the questionnaire ● Administer a rating scale questionnaire an attendance record will be kept ●Distribute and collect the questionnaires.	Verbal reports, anecdotes, an attendance record were used. A rating scale questionnaire was developed specifically for the program and used to assess parents' feelings of competence.	Author of the Practicum Proposal .	Week 5-9 Week 9-10 Week 9-10

Appendix B

Sample: Public Service Poster

paredos

PARENT EDUCATION FOR DEVELOPMENT IN BARBADOS

IS CONDUCTING A

"CONFLICT RESOLUTION WORKSHOP"

FOR PARENTS OF ADOLESCENTS

TO BE HELD ON

April 12 & 13 1996
9:00A.M. TO 4:00P.M.

AT

ERDISTON TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGE

PLEASE CONTACT PAREDOS AT 427-0212 FOR FURTHER DETAILS

Appendix C

Sample: Workshop Agenda/ Curriculum

Workshop Agenda

Objectives:

✍

Participants will be assisted to:

1. Understand the purpose of the workshop and their role in relation to the program.

2.Identify and examine ways that parents and adolescents handle angry feelings.

3. Demonstrate skills and techniques offer effective communication.

4. Examine their own family styles of conflict management.

5. Set personal goals for strengthening their relationship with their adolescents.

Day 1

8:30 - 9:00 - **Registration**

9:00 - 9:15 - **Introduction and Overview**

● Orientation to training program

● Expectations and roles

● Agenda review

Session (1)

9:30 - 10:30 - **Introduction to Feelings**

● Awareness of feelings

● Identify feeling words and actions

● Manage angry feelings

10.30 - 10.45 - **Break**

Session (2)

10:45 -12:0 - **"I" Messages**

Warm-up exercise / review ● Identify "I" Messages

● "I" Message formula

● Skills needed for effective "I" Messages

12:00-1:00- **Lunch**

Session (3)

1:00-2:30- **Active Listening**

Warm-up exercise /Review

● Identify good and poor listening skills

● Listening rules and techniques

● Process communication skills

2:30 -2:45 - **Break**

2:45 - 4:00 - **Overview, Demonstration with Discussion**

4:00 - **Wrap-up**

Day 2

Session (3)

9:00-10.00-**Problem Solving**

Warm-up exercise/ review

- Characteristics of problem solving
- Types of problem solving techniques
- Aides and barriers of effective problem solving
- Respecting self and others
- Problem solving skills

10:30 -10:45 - **Break**

Session (4)

10:45 - 12:30 - **Conflict**

- Meaning of conflict
- Causes of conflict
- Identify conflict situations
- Explain concepts of win/win, lose/lose, and win/lose

12:30-1:30 - **Lunch**

Session (5)

1:30-2:30-Conflict Resolution

- Conflict resolution strategies
- Use of communication and problem solving skills
- Steps to resolve conflict
- Conflicting values

Session (6)

2:30 - 3:30 - **Overview and Discussion**

- Mobilizing parent involvement and cooperation
- How to integrate conflict resolution skills within the family
- Where do we go from here

Schedule of support and follow-up workshop

3:30 - 4:00 - **Evaluation\ Closing Remarks**

A Conflict Resolution Curriculum

for Parents of Adolescents

Session 1.

Introduction/ Expectation and Roles

Objectives:

To create a friendly relaxed environment

- To present a brief profile of each participant
- To identify workshop expectations and Roles

Time: 30 Minutes

Activities:

(1) *Warm-up Exercise:* A Caribbean Song entitled " Good Morning," will be sung by the participants as they walk around the room to greet each other. (10 Minutes.)

(2) *Face-to-Face Interaction:* Participants will be encouraged to find a partner and to share the below listed information with each other. Each participant will write the responses of their partner on a piece of newsprint, the information will then be posted on the wall around the room and used for discussion. (10 Minutes)

Name	A positive word to describe self
Number of adolescent children	Special interest/ hobbies

(3) *Expectations and Roles:* The Facilitators will encourage participants to share their

expectations for the workshop and to discuss the role they can play in the program This information will then be written on the flip chart and used as a guide throughout the sessions.

Session 2

Feelings

Objectives:

- Identify and discuss feeling words
- Associate feelings with negative and positive experiences

Time: 1 hour, 15 minutes.

Remarks:

We begin with the belief that each individual experiences positive and negative feelings. In this session we will identify feeling words, and share ideas about feelings and how they evoke certain behaviors.

Activities:

(1) *Warm-up Exercise:* while listening to different forms of cultural music participants will be asked to express their feelings using dance. (5 Minutes.)

(2) *Identify Feeling Words*: Participants are asked to identify feeling words. The facilitator will initiate a discussion on the importance of expressing feelings words. Participants will then be asked to share feeling words, these words are written on the

flip chart and posted on the wall, and will form the foundation for the other communication skills. (15 Minutes.)

(3) *Associate Feelings with Experiences:* Each participants is given two pieces of newsprint on which to draw a negative and a positive experience they encountered as an adolescent. Participants are cautioned to complete the two drawings in silence and not to worry about being artistic. After the art work is displayed on the wall, each participant is given one minute to explain his/her experiences and the feelings associated with them. Participants will be discouraged from being judgmental or blaming. (40 Minutes.)

(4) *Discussion*: The facilitator will stimulate discussion in order to determine participants views about the session and to process their experiences in a meaningful way. (15 Minutes.)

Materials: * Flip chart paper

*Markers

*Masking Tape.

* Radio/Cassette

Session 3

"I" Messages

Objective:

- To express thoughts and feelings through the use of "I" messages.
- To recognize feelings that are sometimes hidden.

Time: 1 hour, 15 Minutes

Remarks:

In this session we are going to look at communicating our feelings through "I" messages. We will also learn the skills needed to effectively communicate negative feelings to others, in particular, our adolescents, so that we do not worsen the conflicts when they arise.

Activities:

(1) Warm-upExercise: All of the participants with the exception of one are asked to form a circle, they must hold hands tightly so that the person on the outside cannot break the circle. After a number of unsuccessful attempts to break the circle, the participant outside the circle shares her/his feelings about on being kept out. (This exercise is not to expose angry feelings but to help parents express their feelings in a positive manner.) The exercise can be discontinued after two or three persons have participated. (10 Minutes)

(2) *"I" Message Formula:* The facilitator will explain the meaning of "I" messages, and how "I"messages are used to communicate feelings. The "I" message formula will be discussed and posted on the wall. (15 Minutes)

(2) *Development of "I" Messages:* Participants will be arranged in small groups, each person will be given a piece of paper with a word written on it. While in the small group participants will develop short sentences using the selected words. These sentences which must reflect their values, ideas and needs, are then developed into "I" messages. This information is then written on a flip chart and shared with the larger group. (20 Minutes)

(4) *Discussion on "I" Messages":* The facilitator will initiate a general discussion on the differences between an "I" message and a "You" message, and How the two different kinds of messages make the listener feel. Participants will be encouraged to draw on their own experiences. (30 minutes)

Material:

*Flip chart paper

* Markers

* Single sheets of paper/ * Masking tape

Session 4

Active Listening

Objective:

- To demonstrate good and poor listening skills
- To listen to feelings as well as words

Time: 1 hour

Remarks:

Active listening is an important strategy parents can use to encourage their adolescents to express feelings and concerns. This exercise will help parents to listen for anger, resentment or frustration when their children talk. Listening also shows a sense of respect to the person who is speaking.

Activities:

(1) Warm-up Exercises: The facilitator will ask participants to walk around the room and greet each other, while singing a local song, entitled, " Communication."

(5 minutes)

(2) *Active Listening Guidelines:* The facilitator will conduct a lecture/discussion on the importance of Active Listening, particularly in conflict situations, where tempers tend to flare and each person is determined to come out the winner. (15 Minutes)

(3) *Non Verbal Communication and Active Listening:* Participants will be asked to

find a partner from among the group, each person will be given two minutes to share an experience they encountered while the other person listens without interruption. This activity continues for another two minutes as participants repeat the same process using "Active Listening." Upon completion of each activity, participants will be encouraged to share their feelings, to discuss the outcome, and to offer possible solutions. Participants will then share their feelings and examine the differences between non-verbal communication and active listening. (45 Minutes)

Materials:

* Flip chart and paper

* Markers

Session 5

Problem Solving

Objectives:

- To introduce participants to problem solving techniques, and help them to apply these techniques to the problems they face.
- To practice problem solving skills in a group situation
- To identify the characteristics of good conflict resolution skills

Time: 2 hours

Remarks:

This session will introduce participants to a step by step outline of problem solving techniques that can be easily practiced by parents during conflict situations with adolescents.

Activities:

(1) *Warm-up Exercise:* After placing a large container (which symbolizes a "Cane fire") in the middle of the room. Each participants will be asked to express a negative feeling or problem they would like to be rid of and then throw it into the fire. After each person has participated in this dumping exercise, they will then be allowed to share their feelings about the exercise. (10 Minutes)

(1) *Overview of Day One:* Divide participants into three groups. Each group will be given one of the topics dealt with the previous day: (1) feelings (2) "I" messages and (3) Active listening. While in their respective groups participants will be asked to: identify what they have learned; determine whether the information is applicable to their home situation; and identify how they intend to use the skills. Explain to each group that the purpose of this activity is to review the sessions presented on the first day of the workshop, and to ensure that their needs and expectations of the workshop are being met. After ten minutes of discussion a repertoire from each group will present their findings with the larger group. (20 Minutes)

(2) *Conflict:* The facilitator will conduct a lecture/discussion on conflict, types of conflict, and the approaches to conflict resolution. (30 Minutes)

(3) *Problem Solving:* The facilitator will introduce the problem-solving process using one of the problems identified by the parents earlier in the workshop.

Once the participants are comfortable with the problem-solving process they will be decided into four groups, each group will identify and role play a problem experienced by one of its participants. At the end of each role play, the presenting group will describe the problem as they see it, then the larger group will discuss the process used in the role play, and make the necessary observations and suggestions.

Materials: * Markers * Overhead Projector

Session 6

Overview and Discussion

Objectives:

- To summarize the main points of Conflict Resolution
- To emphasize that the primary aim of the workshop is to improve parents understanding of communication and problem solving in order to improve parent-adolescent relationship.
- To encourage personal reflection and goal setting for strengthening Parent-Adolescent relationships

Time: 1 hour

Remarks

In this session participants will have an opportunity to briefly discuss what they have learned at the workshop and how this newly acquired knowledge can be applied in their lives.

Activities:

(1) *Parent involvement:* Participants will be broken into small groups. Each group will be asked to select one of the come up with suggestions and recommendations for their future involvement with one of the following: their adolescents, each other, or the social agencies.

(2)facilitate a discussion on proposed schedule of activities.

Overview:

Mobilizing parent involvement and cooperation----------

Integration of conflict Resolution Skill

Schedule and follow-up workshop

Materials

Flip chart paper

Markers

Appendix D

Sample : Registration Form

Conflict Resolution Workshop for Parents of Adolescents April 12 & 13 1996 Registration Form

Name ---------- **Age**------- **Tel #**----------

Address ----------

Age of Adolescent Child(ren) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

Sex of Adolescent Child(ren ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

My expectations for the workshop are: (Please check)

- ❑ To learn more about conflict resolution
- ❑ To become a better listener
- ❑ To be able to understand my child(ren) better
- ❑ To learn more about myself
- ❑ To improve my relationship with my Adolescent
- ❑ Other

Will you be ordering lunch today? ○ No ○Yes

If Yes, please circle your selection

(1) Rice & Stew (2) Rice & Fish (3) Macaroni & Fish (4) Vegetable Plate

*** All selections include a small salad**

Appendix E

Sample: Workshop Evaluation

Conflict Resolution Workshop For Parents of Adolescents

April 12th and 13th

Evaluation Form

Please rate the Training Worshop :☹ Poor ✓ OK ☺ Good

The activity I enjoyed the most was:_____

The pace of the workshop was: ⏪ Too Slow Just Right ✈ Too Fast

The three things I learned from the workshop were:

_____

_____

The activities were: ■ Boring ✺ Unique !! Exciting

I feel I am a better: ❑ Talker ❑ Listener ❑ Communicator ❑ Problem Solver ❑ Helper ❑ Other:

I want to learn more about: _____

The workshop was worthwhile: No Yes

The workshop was well organized: No Yes

The facilitators of the workshop were: Confusing Informative Clear

I would recommend this workshop to a friend: No Yes

Any suggestions to improve the workshop?

Appendix F
Sample: Attendance Record

Conflict Resolution Program

Attendance Record

Name: ---------- Date: ----------

Facilitator: ---------- Time: ----------

Number of Agency Visits: ---------- Duration of visits:---------

Number of telephone calls: ---------- Duration of Calls:---------

---

1. Contacts made as scheduled Yes No

2. Facilitator was available. Yes No

3. Session focussed on previously discussed goals. Yes No

4. Were parents allowed to share other concern? Yes No

The sessions focused on the following concerns:

* Parents' ability to use the communication and problem solving skills.

* The difficulties/successes they encounter while using the skills.

* Their adolescent's responses to the new approach.

* Their views/opinions of being supported/guided by an agency professional.

* The usefulness of the two-week home based program.

Appendix G

Sample: Rating Scale Questionnaire

A Rating Scale Questionnaire

Administered to Parents of Adolescents

Age [ ] Sex [ ] [ ]

Marital status [S] [M] [D] [SP] Age (s) of Adolescent Children [ ] [ ] [ ]

Please complete this form and return to the program facilitator.

1. Overall, how valuable was the workshop for you?

Of no value Of little value Of moderate value Valuable Very valuable

/ / / / / / / / / /

2. Overall, the information presented at the workshop was appropriate and related to you and your adolescent's needs.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Undecided Agree Strongly Agree

/ / / / / / / / / /

3. Overall, the teaching method of the workshop was appropriate.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Undecided Agree Strongly Agree

/ / / / / / / / / /

4. How useful was the overall program?

Not very useful Not useful Undecided Useful Very useful

/ / / / / / / / / /

5. Organizationally, how well was the program put together?

Very poorly	Poorly	Unsure	Well	Very Well
/ /	/ /	/ /	/ /	/ /

For each statement below please rate your knowledge of the communication and problem solving skills listed.

Indicators	False	Don't Know	True
6. Adolescents' opinions should be valued.	( )	( )	( )
7. It is important to listen to our adolescents.	( )	( )	( )
8. To express feelings using "I" messages help us to focus on ourselves.	( )	( )	( )
9. Communication and problem solving skills Can be used to resolve conflict.	( )	( )	( )
10. Parents are always right.	( )	( )	( )
11. Conflict is inevitable.	( )	( )	( )
12 Resolving conflict using the win-win approach improves parent-adolescent relationships.	( )	( )	( )
14.Parents controlling behavior can sometimes lead to rebellion.	( )	( )	( )

For each statement below rate your knowledge, attitudes and behaviors at various periods of the program.

Indicators	Before Training	After Training
15. I usually ensure that my adolescent understands my messages.	/_/	/_/
16. I listen for feelings as well as facts when my adolescent expresses concern.	/_/	/_/
17. I express my feelings whenever I have a problem.	/_/	/_/
18. I accept responsibility for my own feelings by using an "I" message.	/_/	/_/
19. I make an effort to work out differences with My adolescent cooperatively.	/_/	/_/
20. I overpower my adolescent with my shouting.	/_/	/_/
21. I have difficulty confronting my adolescent when a conflict arises.	/_/	/_/

Please mark an X to indicate how often you use the following communication skills.

Indicators	Never	Sometimes	Often
22. Express my feelings in a positive manner	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
23. Encourage my adolescent to express feelings in a Positive manner.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
24. Demand total obedience from my adolescent.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
25. Withdraw love from my adolescent when he/she Is disobedient.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
26. Use "I" messages when expressing my feelings.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
27. Allow my adolescent to share his/her viewpoint.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
28. Listen to what is being said to me without interruptions.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
29. Pay attention to my own style of dealing with conflict.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

Circle the appropriate degree for each statement you have experienced.

30. The knowledge gained will help me manage conflict situations with my adolescents.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

31. Since I started this conflict management program my coping skills have improved.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

32. Using an "I"message can be difficult at times.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

33. Identifying and expressing feelings help me to be less hostile toward my adolescent.

34. Expressing my feelings help me to accept that I own the problem.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

35. Disagreements should be discussed and worked through.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

36. Problem solving lessens the tension between me and my adolescent

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

37. The win-win approach to resolve conflict should be encouraged

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree